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Clean amended claims from Preliminary Amendment A dated 22 March 2001

**Claim 1**

A thermo and photo stable composition comprising a hydrogel generated from a xanthane and chitosane complex, said hydrogel comprising at least one thermo or photo sensitive substance selected from the group consisting of: vitamins, amino acids, nucleic acids and tri-peptides, said hydrogel being adapted to release said thermo or photo sensitive substances over several hours in a human or animal subject.

**Claim 2**

The composition as defined in claim 1, wherein said thermo or photo sensitive substances are vitamins in a proportion of 5 to 25% of the total weight of said composition.

**Claim 3**

The composition as defined in claim 2, wherein said vitamins are selected from the group consisting of: A, B, C, D, E and K.

**Claim 4**

The composition as defined in claim 3, wherein said vitamin is vitamin A.

**Claim 5**

The composition as defined in claim 3, wherein said vitamin is vitamin C.

**Claim 6**

The composition as defined in claim 1, wherein said thermo and photo sensitive substances are liposoluble.

**Claim 7**

The composition as defined in claim 1, wherein the thermo and photo sensitive substances are hydrosoluble.

**Claim 8**

A process for the preparation of the composition as defined in claim 6, comprising the following steps:

- (a) dissolving the liposoluble substances in ethanol;
- (b) adding this solution while stirring to a xanthane solution;
- (c) pulverizing the solution from step (b) into an aqueous chitosane solution;
- (d) recovering the so-formed hydrogel.

All the steps being carried out in the absence of oxygen and light.

**Claim 9**

A process for the preparation of the composition as defined in claim 7, comprising the following steps:

- (a) pulverizing a xanthane solution into a chitosane solution;
- (b) recovering the so-formed hydrogel, the recovery being characterized by a lyophilization of the hydrogel;
- (c) introducing the lyophilized hydrogel into an aqueous solution comprising hydrosoluble substances;
- (d) incorporating hydrosoluble substances into the hydrogel, by diffusion of hydrosoluble substances during the swelling of the hydrogel, said hydrogel having a degree of swelling (a) of 2000% or more.

**Claim 10**

The preparation process as defined in claim 9 wherein, the stabilization of said hydrosoluble substances is favored by the addition of amino acids into the aqueous solution during step (c).

**Claim 11**

The process as defined in claim 10 wherein, said amino acids are selected from the group consisting of: L-cysteine, L-cystine, L-methionine, or mixtures thereof.

**Claim 12**

The preparation process as defined in claim 9 wherein, the stabilization of the hydrosoluble substances is favored by the addition of oligopeptides during step (c).

**Claim 13**

The use of the composition of any one of claims 1 to 7 in the manufacture of a dermatological product.

**Claim 14**

The use as defined in claim 13 wherein, said dermatological product is a cream.

**Claim 15**

The use as defined in claim 14 wherein, said thermo and photo sensitive substance is vitamin A.

**Claim 16**

The use of the composition of any one of claims 1 to 7 in the manufacture of a dietary supplement.

**Claim 17**

A process for the preparation of the composition as defined in claim 6, comprising the following steps:

- (a) dissolving the liposoluble substances in ethanol;
- (b) providing a xanthane solution;
- (c) pulverizing the solution from step (b) into an aqueous chitosane solution;
- (d) recovering the so-formed hydrogel;
- (e) incorporating the solution of step (a) by diffusion into the hydrogel of step (d).

All the steps being carried out in the absence of oxygen and light.